

Message Text

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PAGE 01 TOKYO 14425 090828Z

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ACTION EB-07

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 EA-07 ISO-00 AID-05 CIAE-00 COME-00

FRB-03 INR-07 NSAE-00 USIA-06 TRSE-00 XMB-02 OPIC-03

SP-02 CIEP-01 LAB-04 SIL-01 OMB-01 STR-04 CEA-01 /067 W

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R 090807Z OCT 75

FM AMEMBASSY TOKYO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3950

INFO AMEMBASSY LONDON

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE TOKYO 14425

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: BGEN, ETRD, JA, UK

SUBJ: REQUEST FOR ASSISTANCE: PFIZER-DISCO

REF: TOKYO 10346 (NOTAL)

1. SUMMARY: MITSUBISHI EFFORTS HAVE SUCCEEDED IN PERSUADING GOJ TO PURCHASE FIVE U.S.-MADE ACTA WHOLE BODY SCANNERS (VALUED T ABOUT \$1.5 MILLION) IN MULTI-MILLION DOLLAR PROJECT FOR JAPANESE MEDICAL UNIVERSITY HOSPITALS. HOWEVER, NUMBER OF BRITISH-MADE EMI BRAIN SCANNERS TO BE BOUGHT WILL STILL TOTAL MOE THAN 30 (VALUE ABOUT \$8 MILLION). MITSUBISHI OFFICIALS MADE HIGH LEVEL APPROACHES IN FINANCE MINISTRY AND ARE CONVINCED THAT GOJ COMMITTED ITSELF TO PURCHASE EMI SCANNERS IN CONJUNCTION WITH VISIT OF QUEEN ELIZABETH TO JAPAN LAST SPRING. END SUMMARY.

2. SINCE TRANSMISSION OF REFTTEL IN JULY, EMBASSY HAS MAINTAINED FREQUENT CONTACT WITH MITSUBISHI OFFICIALS RE THEIR EFFORTS TO ENCOURAGE GOJ TO PURCHASE ACTA WHOLE BODY SCANNERS INSTEAD OF BRITISH-MADE EMI BRAIN SCANNERS FOR MEDICAL UNIVERSITIES WITH FUNDS PROVIDED BY AN ASSOCIATION OF AUTO INSURANCE COMPANIES. THROUGHOUT THIS PERIOD MITSUBISHI OFFICIALS CONTINUED TO URGE EMBASSY NOT TO
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PAGE 02 TOKYO 14425 090828Z

INTERVENE FURTHER IN MATTER WITH GOJ BECAUSE OF WHAT THEY

FELT TO BE EXTREME SENSITIVITY OF ISSUE. ON OCTOBER 9, MITSUBISHI INFORMED EMBASSY THAT AS RESULT OF ITS OWN EFFORTS, MINISTRY OF FINANCE (MOF) OFFICIALS HAVE FINALLY DECIDED TO PURCHASE 5 ACTA SCANNERS (APPROX. PRICE \$1.5 MILLION). THIS WILL APPARENTLY BE DONE, NOT BY REDUCING THE NUMBER OF EMI SCANNERS TO BE PURCHASED, BUT BY INCREASING TOTAL NUMBER OF SCANNERS TO BE FINANCED UNDER PROJECT TO 36 OR 37. ABOUT 31 OR 32 EMI SCANNERS (VALUED AT ABOUT \$8 MILLION) ARE TO BE PURCHASED. ACCORDING TO MITSUBISHI, THE GERMAN FIRM SIEMENS AND ANOTHER AMERICAN FIRM HAD BEEN UNABLE TO SELL ANY OF THEIR SCANNERS FOR THIS PROJECT.

3. MITSUBISHI'S STRATEGY HAD INCLUDED APPROACHES TO BOTH FINANCE MINISTER OHIRA AND ONE UNNAMED VICE MINISTER IN SAME MINISTRY. MITSUBISHI WAS INFORMED BY BOTH OF THESE OFFICIALS THAT IT SHOULD NOT PUSH TOO HARD IN THIS MATTER SINCE IT COULD WELL PROVE TO ITS DISADVANTAGE. MITSUBISHI OFFICIALS SAY THEY HAVE GOOD REASON TO BELIEVE (SOURCE WAS PROBABLY ONE OR BOTH OF THE TWO FINANCE MINISTERS) THAT THE GOJ COMMITTED ITSELF TO PURCHASE 30 OR MORE EMI SCANNERS IN DISCUSSIONS WITH THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT PRIOR TO VISIT OF QUEEN ELIZABETH TO JAPAN LAST SPRING. COMMITMENT WAS MADE, ACCORDING TO MITSUBISHI OFFICIALS, AS PART OF GOJ EFFORTS TO CONVINCE BRITISH OF ITS SINCERITY TO INCREASE PURCHASES FROM GREAT BRITAIN TO LESSEN JAPAN'S HUGE BALANCE OF TRADE SURPLUS WITH THAT COUNTRY.

4. FIRST ACTA SCANNER ARRIVED IN JAPAN FEW DAYS AGO AND NOW UNDERGOING CLINICAL TESTING AT HOSPITAL IN TOKYO. ONCE CLEARANCE HAS BEEN OBTAINED (NORMAL CLEARANCE TIME IS ABOUT 6-9 MONTHS) MITSUBISHI SHOULD HAVE NO DIFFICULTY IN MAKING OTHER SUBSTANTIAL SALES IN LIGHT OF LARGE EXPANDING MARKET IN JAPAN FOR ADVANCED MEDICAL EQUIPMENT.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: MEDICAL CARE, ELECTRONIC EQUIPMENT
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 09 OCT 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: KelleyW0
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975TOKYO14425
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750350-1090
From: TOKYO
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19751068/aaaacitw.tel
Line Count: 98
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EB
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 75 TOKYO 10346
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: KelleyW0
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 24 JUN 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <24 JUN 2003 by ShawDG>; APPROVED <13 NOV 2003 by KelleyW0>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
06 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: REQUEST FOR ASSISTANCE: PFIZER-DISCO
TAGS: BGEM, ETRD, JA, UK, PFIZER-DISCO
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 06 JUL 2006